

Message Text

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PAGE 01 SEOUL 08210 100812Z

21

ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 /026 W

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FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7390

INFO CINCPAC IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SEOUL 8210

EXDIS - MILITARY ADDEE HANDLE AS SPECAT EXCLUSIVE

CINCPAC FOR POLAD PASS HABIB AND SNEIDER

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, KS

SUBJECT: ACTIVITIES OF AMERICAN MISSIONARY GEORGE OGLE

REF STATE 270113

1. CHARGE CALLED ON ACTING FONMIN LHO DECEMBER 10
AND, NOTING THAT HE WAS ACTING UNDER INSTRUCTIONS,
MADE POINTS OUTLINED REFTEL PARA 1.

2. LHO SAID THAT OGLE CASE HAD BEEN REFERRED TO
MINISTRY OF JUSTICE AND THAT IT WAS HIS UNDERSTANDING
THAT MINISTER OF JUSTICE OR VICE MINISTER WOULD
SOON CALL OGLE IN FOR DISCUSSION OF CASE. AT THAT
TIME, EVIDENCE OF ALLEGED MISCONDUCT WOULD BE
PRESENTED IN DETAIL TO OGLE, WHO WOULD BE GIVEN
OPPORTUNITY TO REBUT CHARGES. LHO SAID HE BELIEVED
EVIDENCE AGAINST OGLE INCLUDED VIDEO TAPES AND
TAPE RECORDINGS. LHO INDICATED THAT EVEN IF OGLE
WAS UNABLE TO DISPROVE EVIDENCE, HE MIGHT BE PERMITTED
TO REMAIN IN KOREA PROVIDED HE APOLOGIZED FOR HIS ACTS
AND AGREED TO CONFINED HIMSELF TO RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES.
LHO SAID THAT THE CASE WAS NO LONGER IN FOREIGN
MINISTRY HANDS, BUT THAT HE WOULD CONVEY THE CHARGE'S
POSITION TO THE PROPER AUTHORITIES.

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3. IN FURTHER DISCUSSION OF ISSUE, LHO SAID PARTY HIGHER OFFICIALS (UNNAMED) WERE ANGERED BY WHAT THEY SAW AS OGLE'S EFFORTS TO RALLY FOREIGN MISSIONARIES AND KOREAN RELIGIOUS FIGURES IN HIS DEFENSE AND GENERALLY PROVOCATIVE REACTION IN THESE CIRCLES TO EXPULSION SUGGESTION. LHO ASCRIBED TONGA ILBO STORY TO ATTEMPT BY OGLE OR HIS SUPPORTERS TO PRESSURE GOVERNMENT. LHO SAID THAT IT WAS THIS KIND OF ACTIVITY THAT HAD UNDERMINED HIS OWN EFFORTS TO HAVE OGLE CASE HANDLED MORE LENIENTLY.

4. COMMENT: WE BELIEVE THAT ROKG IS FULLY AWARE OF THE NEGATIVE PUBLIC AND PRESS REACTION THAT WILL ENSUE IF OGLE IS EXPELLED. IT IS EVIDENTLY WEIGHING THIS COST AGAINST THE ADVANTAGES IT SEES IN ELIMINATING AN EFFECTIVE CRITIC OF THE ROKG AND, BY SO DOING, POSSIBLY THREATENING OTHER AMERICAN MISSIONARIES INTO SILENCE. APART FROM DESIRE TO SUPPRESS CRITICISM, ROKG AT THIS POINT MAY FEEL THAT OGLE ISSUE HAS PROCEEDED SO FAR THAT FAILURE TO EXPEL OGLE WITHOUT SIGNED APOLOGY WOULD BE AFFRONT TO ITS SOVEREIGNTY. IN ANY EVENT, LHO'S COMMENTS INDICATE THAT THE ROKG IS LEANING HEAVILY TOWARD EXPULSION BUT THAT NO FINAL DECISION HAS YET BEEN MADE.
ERICSON

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